United Nations S/PV.4257 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4257th meeting

Tuesday, 16 January 2001, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Jayakumar	(Singapore)
Members:	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Mauritius	Mr. Neewoor
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchynski
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

Strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries

Letter dated 8 January 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2001/21)

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01-21482 (E)

The meeting was resumed at 3.15 p.m.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): Mr. President, we want to welcome you to the Council and to give Singapore its due for having taken the initiative to organize and convene this discussion, which I found very interesting this morning, as, I am sure, did my colleagues.

I have taken heed of the suggestion that we take advantage of the lunch period to think about some of the items that were broached this morning by the troop contributors who spoke. There were a lot of recommendations and a lot of thoughts advanced. As the paper the presidency produced points out, there is already a long history of decisions in regard to the question of how consultations between the Security Council and the troop contributors should be organized. It is obvious — and I do not think this is a question of ill will on anybody's part; in fact, I am quite sure it is not — that the situation is still not satisfactory, as has been made clear repeatedly over the years and was made perfectly clear this morning.

Let me add that the situation is not satisfactory from our point of view, either. We have given lots of thought to the need to improve the exchange of information. The members of the Security Council need, and the United Nations as a whole needs, stronger cooperation between the troop-contributing countries and the Security Council and, I would add, between the Secretary-General and the Secretariat. We have at least three major actors here, not just two.

I think our shared goal, as it came out this morning as well, is that we want to make the operations of peacekeeping more effective and more efficient. To do that, we need a real partnership, and that requires somewhat of a change in mentality, I think, as some of the speakers noted this morning. We need the troop contributors, the Security Council and the Secretary-General to look at each other as partners in a common endeavour with a common purpose.

I want to recall Ambassador Heinbecker's exhortation this morning about integrating authority with risk. I think that is a very good way to look at the issue. This requires input, will and commitment from each participant in this partnership to make it work better. That means meaningful and active participation, thought and some consideration for the other partners. It does not necessarily mean new mechanisms as such. We have lots of mechanisms and there are lots of ideas that have been floated and tried in the past. We can have regular meeting upon meeting upon meeting in various orders and sequences, but they risk becoming, as at least one speaker said this morning, ritualistic if we do not put the proper content and spirit into them.

I also want to note — in connection with those who spoke about the effectiveness of United Nations operations and the need to ensure the security of peacekeeping operations — that the United States remains the largest contributor of United Nations civilian police, with well over 800 personnel deployed to United Nations peacekeeping operations. Therefore we are more than sympathetic with the concerns of troop contributors for the safety of their personnel.

The bottom line here is that we should all want the means of exchange that works, that informs the troop contributors adequately and on a timely basis, that really provides input to Security Council decision-making, that improves implementation and improves the clarity of mandates and, at the end of the day, that produces clearer goals and better performance. This will require meaningful, interactive exchanges among the troop contributors, the Secretariat and the Security Council. A good example — the best one that I have seen so far and one that others have also cited this morning — was the series of meetings that we had in connection with the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) this fall and the Security Council mission that visited UNAMSIL, where we had good informal and informed exchanges that really did fit the parameters that I have just been discussing.

My delegation is open to new ideas to build a better process and to overcome inertia. Our other overriding concern has to be that Security Council efficiency and fulfilment of responsibilities is maintained, as is set out under the Charter. Several people spoke about that also this morning. We would not think it wise to blur the responsibilities of the participants in this partnership or to hinder Council decision-making. We are confident that we can improve on this partnership without doing so.

We can use existing mechanisms. We can find ways to have more interactive exchanges between the troop contributors, the Secretariat and the Security Council. The troop contributors should take the initiative when they feel it appropriate, or when an individual troop contributor, for that matter, feels the

need to so do. In that regard, I applaud the Deputy Secretary-General's comments this morning about her openness, and that of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in that regard. That is the right attitude, and it should be taken advantage of.

We have accomplished a great deal in the past six months with the Brahimi report and follow-up to strengthen the Department of Peacekeeping Operations as well as United Nations peacekeeping operations. We need to continue that effort, since this work is at the heart of providing real capabilities to the problems we have been discussing. We should work to make Security Council resolution 1327 (2000) a reality. It contains good ideas and good intentions, and we need to work to bring them into being. I want also to echo the suggestion of the representative of Pakistan and others that, as we are going through this effort, we take a look at the resources of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, not only to make sure that it has the resources it needs for mounting an operation but also the resources required to conduct effective liaison with the Security Council and the troop contributors.

My delegation is willing to look at new ideas to bolster this process, but as I have stated, we do not confuse mechanisms and more meetings with substance, cooperation and partnership. We all know the problem; it has been around for a while. We are willing to work very hard to address it, and we suggest that we proceed to do so without further delay.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): Mr. President, it is very good to see you in the chair today. Thank you, Mr. Minister, for your delegation's very imaginative approach to this debate. I also would like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General for her statement, which set us off to a good start.

The Permanent Representative of Sweden spoke this morning on behalf of the European Union, and what he said reflected the United Kingdom's views on the fundamental points of this issue. But I would like to say a few words from our own perspective as a Council member and as a regular and major contributor to peacekeeping in one form or another. I would also like to react to some of the interesting and substantive interventions of troop contributors this morning, which set out a number of points that we will have to take into account.

It was a good idea to have this debate in this format. As we in the Security Council, and others in the wider United Nations system, grapple with making peacekeeping operations work better, one thing has become clear. We — that is, the Council and the Secretariat — need a comprehensive approach to peacekeeping that looks at reform in a cohesive way and raises the professional capability of the United Nations effort across the board. Our key partners in that must be the troop contributors. I very much agree with Ambassador Cunningham's accent on partnership.

The non-paper that your delegation, Mr President, circulated before this debate acknowledged that this is not a new subject. But it has resurfaced with force in recent months. Some of the contributors to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) spoke this morning about their particular experiences of that operation. The points of criticism are perhaps not quite so clear cut as has sometimes been suggested, but we must take careful note of what they have said. The Brahimi report also pointed out the need to involve troop contributors in our work in a much more systematic way.

The truth is that peacekeeping operations in 2001 face much more complex challenges than the mechanisms we have so far put in place can meet. The nature of conflict has changed. National contingents have harder work to do in securing peace in situations where the parties to a conflict can be difficult to identify and where their commitment to peace is all too often ambivalent, or worse. Contingents have been given new and tougher tasks in ever more complicated situations, where the political problems are not necessarily solved by a force deployment or a peace agreement.

We should be clear that the benefits of a more proactive approach to cooperation are not merely to be found in building a better relationship with contributors, important though that may be. Driving for more effective peacekeeping operations means ensuring that contributors know what to expect in both general and specific terms. Better and more regular consultations will ensure that national contingents do not arrive in theatre unprepared or unequipped for the mission that the Council expects them to fulfil. They should mean a more cohesive operation, with all contributors clear about the goals that the Security Council has set. And they will help to ensure that the resolutions we adopt will not be paper tigers, fruitless

in practice because the necessary contributions cannot be found for a mandate that is over-ambitious.

Everybody recognizes that the arrangements we have had for cooperation with troop contributors in the past have not worked properly. The standard meetings have too frequently been desultory affairs, with little or no exchange of views, though the fault for that is not necessarily only on one side. We need to know how current or potential contributors feel about the decisions we are planning to take. They need to be able to comment on the Secretariat's and the Council's analysis of the situation. For instance, what information might they have from their contingents on the ground that would impact on our considerations? We need to explain better to them the specific concerns that are driving our work. The aim is, as the European Union statement says, greater transparency throughout all the phases of a peacekeeping operation.

That is not to say that the Security Council should devolve its Charter duties. The troop contributors are not contesting, I think, that the Council makes its own decisions, in line with its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. But we must do so on the basis of the widest possible consultation. Our decisions have to be right, and the implementation of them has to be quick and effective. No national defence system, and no large corporation, would separate out its decision-making and its operational processes to the extent that the United Nations has done up to now.

We also need to bear in mind that Security Council consultations with troop contributors cannot cover all of the ground. Informal consultation between troop-contributing countries (TCCs) and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations will remain critical to the task of preparing and sustaining effective peacekeeping operations. As the European Union statement made clear, this will require decisive action to give the Secretariat the capacity it needs to do the job. While the new posts endorsed by the Fifth Committee before Christmas are a good start, we need to take further steps to improve the planning capacity of the Organization, the military and the civilian police. A proper flow of information to the troop contributors means ensuring that the Secretariat has a proper analytical capacity. We need to revisit the concept of an Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat, or EISAS, which was contained in the Brahimi report.

Resolution 1327 (2000) gave us a good framework for all this work. Holding a private meeting at key stages of the consideration of new or evolving mandates will help. But new procedures are only half the story. We also need a step change in our attitudes. We in the Council, the Secretariat and the troop contributors have a shared responsibility to make those consultations productive: to exchange views in a frank and forthright manner and to listen to what others have to say.

When I spoke at the Council debate on "No exit without strategy" on 15 November, I suggested forming a working group of the Council to look at generic peacekeeping issues. I think it is now time to move to a decision on this idea, which will provide the Council with a new instrument to increase the effectiveness of its work in this area, while respecting the prerogatives of the General Assembly.

A working group would bring cohesion to the way the Council handles peacekeeping, currently all too often dealt in an ad hoc way in piecemeal discussion or through thematic debates. It would allow us to take a step back from time to time and examine the overall trends in our work on peacekeeping, learning lessons where we can. It could examine in depth particular issues causing problems. It would also help us to look carefully at our working methods. We need to be sure that we are getting the best military advice and that our own decisions are militarily sound. A working group would give us the machinery to address that issue. It might also play a role in establishing a more direct and proactive relationship with the troop contributors, who could perhaps think of forming a corresponding grouping for each main operation.

Neither should such a working group shy away from the difficult questions that United Nations peacekeeping must face if it is to become a truly professional force for international peace and security. These could include questions such as the increasingly robust nature of modern peacekeeping and — another issue I raised in the November open debate — the reasons why modern hi-tech armies may be unwilling to put themselves under United Nations command and control. These are not easy questions to address and we will not always agree, but a frank and open discussion would help. Above all, it would help us to see beyond the frequent assumption that political attitudes are

always the problem, when there are often concrete and resolvable difficulties that should be addressed.

I look forward to your summing up of this debate, Mr. President. It is clear from what we heard from the troop contributors this morning that we have food for thought and a need for pragmatic change. Where there are substantive ideas for progress that can find consensus, we should move to decisions quickly, but we should be clear that what is required is as much a change of approach as a change in procedure. My delegation is beginning to make that shift and we look forward to working through the various problems that we will face in the future with our partners both in the Security Council and in the wider United Nations system.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I wish to welcome you warmly, Sir, and to express our pleasure at seeing you personally preside over this important meeting of the Security Council, which your country recently joined. I wish to commend Ambassador Mahbubani and his team, who have skilfully and competently guided the work of the Council since the beginning of this month.

I also wish to congratulate your country for choosing the issue of strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries for our debate today. This is an issue which has assumed increasing importance recently in the light of the various reports on peacekeeping operations that were issued last year and that have elicited great interest within the United Nations, the most recent of which was the Brahimi report. These reports unleashed a certain momentum to improve United Nations peacekeeping operations. Strengthening consultations and cooperation with troop-contributing countries is among the required tools for attaining that objective.

The document you have offered us in connection with this debate, for which we thank you, places the issue of strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries in its historical context, identifies areas for such cooperation and suggests specific points on which our debate might focus today. Participation in this debate by States that are not Security Council members and that contribute troops is significant.

Tunisia is a troop-contributing country and, since the 1960s, has participated in several United Nations peacekeeping operations in various regions of the world. We share many of the views and ideas expressed this morning by troop-contributing countries.

Troop-contributing countries play an essential role in the implementation on the ground of the mandates of peacekeeping operations created by the Security Council. Their soldiers have been increasingly called upon to fulfil complex and dangerous mandates. Thus, the Security Council's decisions in this area have consequences for those countries, most of which are not members of the Council and hence not involved in drafting the mandates assigned to their contingents.

Experience has shown that the absence of consultations and cooperation with troop-contributing countries can create serious difficulties, and even embarrassing situations, in the implementation of mandates, as was clearly described this morning by the representatives of troop-contributing countries. Those countries have continuously called for significant improvements in the consultation process. The recent tribulations of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone have been frequently cited as an example of situations that may arise from the absence of cooperation and consultation with troop-contributing countries.

The debate of recent months within the United Nations on peacekeeping operations has made us even more aware of the urgent need significantly to strengthen consultation and cooperation between troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat. The Brahimi report stressed the value of institutionalizing such consultations. In his report on implementing the Brahimi report, the Secretary-General fully agreed with the view of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations on the need to strengthen consultations between troop-contributing countries and the Security Council, inter alia, through new procedures and mechanisms. Tunisia fully supports that recommendation and, during negotiations in the Council on resolution 1327 (2000) on the recommendations of the Brahimi report, advocated the Council's endorsement of the institutionalization of consultations with troop-contributing countries and the convening of meetings with them at their request. In its decision, however, the Council did not go so far as to institutionalize consultations.

Nevertheless, we welcome the compromise arrived at by the members of the Council, which we consider to be a first step in the right direction. The

General Assembly, for its part, supported strengthening consultations and we feel that the time has now come to implement these decisions.

In accordance with resolution 1327 (2000), the Security Council must hold private meetings with troop-contributing countries, including at their request, before drafting a mission mandate and throughout its implementation. We see such meetings as ad hoc meetings in which there is genuine dialogue among Council members, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat on a given peacekeeping operation so that information and views can be exchanged before the Council takes any decision on the operation and its mandate. At these meetings, the Secretariat would inform the Security Council and the troop-contributing countries of the mission's scope and any potential risks. Such meetings could address the question of the security and safety of personnel, an issue that was stressed by several speakers this morning. In this way, troop-contributing countries will be able to assess the situation and their views will be taken into account.

We see this format as a first step that could be followed by other, larger steps. The Permanent Representative of Jordan suggested this morning that, a year from now, the Security Council hold another debate on strengthening consultations with troop-contributing countries and we support that suggestion. A second debate could provide us with an opportunity to assess the implementation and value of the format agreed on by the Council.

Moreover, the holding by the Secretariat of regular informational meetings for troop-contributing countries and the conveying of timely, relevant and comprehensive information regarding personnel on the ground will make it possible for those countries to follow the development of a peacekeeping operation at every stage.

The Security Council should continue to hold meetings with troop-contributing countries before the departure of a Council mission so as to consult with them about the objective of the mission. A second meeting should be devoted to dealing with the results of the mission. Last year, the Council held public meetings to discuss the results of some of its missions. The participation of troop-contributing countries and other Member States of the Organization at such meetings provides for greater transparency in the Council's work and also serves to broaden and take into account the views of other States Members of the United Nations.

It would be useful for the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat to hold an assessment meeting at the conclusion of a peacekeeping operation to draw lessons from the operation and to identify the strong points and the lacunae in its management, which will help to better prepare future operations.

I would also like to stress the importance of consultations between the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries in the preparation of guidelines for peacekeeping personnel. Such consultations can help ensure the effective implementation of approved guidelines.

Meaningful dialogue and cooperation at all stages of a mission will make it possible for all parties concerned to take their decisions with full knowledge of a given situation, strengthen mutual trust and encourage Member States to contribute more to peacekeeping operations. This is a matter of developing a true partnership that can ensure the success of peacekeeping operations.

These are some of the issues that could be dealt with in consultations with troop-contributing countries. But there may also be other consultations held in different formats according to how things develop in the future.

In addition to the principles that have always guided them, to succeed, peacekeeping operations must count on several elements. Those include clear mandates, adequate resources, consultation, and cooperation and coordination at all levels. Today's debate will certainly contribute to finding ways to give new impetus to cooperation among troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): Allow me to welcome you most warmly, Mr. Minister, on behalf of the Government and people of Jamaica. My delegation is confident that under your guidance this debate will prove extremely useful in helping the United Nations and its Member States to address the increasing complexities of peacekeeping operations. My delegation congratulates you and the Singapore delegation for your foresight in scheduling this meeting.

Mr. President, your delegation's paper on strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries has served to focus our discussion. It underscored the fact that troop-contributing countries are perhaps the most indispensable element of any peacekeeping operation and that the relationship between troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat is of paramount importance. As was indicated in your delegation's paper, the main purpose of this open debate is to provide all participants in United Nations peacekeeping with an opportunity to reflect on recent experiences, with a view to distilling some lessons that can be learned.

We have had an opportunity to listen to the concerns and the recommendations of some of the troop-contributing countries. My delegation thanks them for sharing their experiences and for contributing constructive and useful suggestions. Indeed, Jamaica fully supports any initiative in the Security Council that is aimed at improving the process of consultations between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries. My delegation's contribution in the examination of the Brahimi report and our subsequent support for the adoption of the working group's recommendations on consultations with troop-contributing countries aptly demonstrate our commitment to this undertaking. The Council's debate last November under the presidency of the Netherlands on issues related to peacekeeping exit strategies was a further illustration of the seriousness with which the Security Council views all matters related to United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The working group on the Brahimi report examined mechanisms and procedures for strengthening consultations with both current and potential troop-contributing countries. It also considered how that might be done before and after the establishment of a peacekeeping mission, particularly on matters affecting the safety and security of personnel and the implications for a mission's use of force. As a result of that examination, the working group made certain specific recommendations to the Security Council.

By adopting resolution 1327 (2000) on 13 November 2000, and by approving thereby the annexed decisions and recommendations, the Council has in fact embraced a new doctrine on peacekeeping operations. That new doctrine sets specific, unambiguous goals for United Nations peacekeeping. In that new doctrine the Council's relationship and the level of consultations with troop-contributing countries are given full and unqualified attention.

The decisions set out in the annex to resolution 1327 (2000) are very clear as to the Council's objectives relating specifically to troop-contributing countries. They include the importance of an improved system of consultations among troop-contributing countries, the Secretariat and the Security Council. The stated purpose is to foster a common understanding of the situation on the ground to which peacekeepers are sent, and that all concerned are cognizant of the mission's mandate and the requirements for its implementation.

Most importantly, the Council agreed to strengthen significantly the existing system of consultations through the holding of private meetings with troop-contributing countries in a form and with a content conducive to making such meetings more interactive and productive. In that regard, a number of troop-contributing countries have made important recommendations during the course of this debate on how best to achieve optimum results. Their recommendations merit our serious consideration.

Also of significance is the fact that under its new doctrine, troop-contributing countries may initiate those meetings with the Security Council. Furthermore, after being identified by the Secretary-General, potential troop contributors may also request a meeting with the Security Council in the case of a new or ongoing peacekeeping operation, during the implementation phase of an operation, and when the Council is considering a change in, or renewal or completion of, a peacekeeping mandate. The process of consultation must be ongoing and must provide troop-contributing countries with the option to initiate such meetings, even if meetings are not contemplated by the Security Council. Most importantly, a troop contributor must have the opportunity to seek such a meeting with the Council when a rapid deterioration in the situation on the ground threatens the safety and security of its troops.

By resolving to give peacekeeping operations clear, credible and achievable mandates, the Security Council has committed itself to removing all doubts as to what is expected of troop contributors before their personnel are deployed. When clearly understood, each

mandate must pre-determines the level of training and equipment required for a peacekeeping operation. When time is of the essence, there is also an obligation for those countries participating in the standby arrangements whose troops are adequately trained and equipped to be ready to respond at short notice when needed for peacekeeping operations. The success or failure of a peacekeeping operation could be determined by the speed with which peacekeepers are deployed.

The Security Council's relationship with troop-contributing countries extends beyond ensuring that we do it right when going in. We have debated the imperatives for an appropriate exit strategy for each mission, and, with the United Nations embarking on increasingly complex peacekeeping missions, the role of peacekeepers has taken on new dimensions. Bearing in mind that the transition from peacekeeping to peace-building is a process and not an event, let us note that peacekeepers are uniquely placed to ensure that this process takes place in a secured environment.

As the Permanent Representative of Japan emphasized to us this morning, many of these missions involve large civilian components, and we agree that it is crucial for the Council to listen to those countries that make contributions of civilians, logistics and equipment. This was taken up in S/PRST/1996/13. We need to ensure that it is fully implemented.

The Security Council, by adopting resolution 1327 (2000), has clearly stated its intentions with respect to troop-contributing countries and the process of consultations during all phases of a peace operation. It is, however, of far more importance that the actions taken or contemplated by the Council give effect to this new doctrine. The Security Council has already acted to improve the level of consultations. Recent meetings between the Council and troop-contributing countries have afforded a greater exchange of views than has been the case in the recent past. Currently, the Security Council is considering the establishment of a committee on peacekeeping operations, to deal specifically with areas of peacekeeping falling within the jurisdiction of the Security Council. The President of the Council, in his wisdom, has asked troop-contributing countries for their comments on this initiative during the course of this debate. My delegation has listened carefully to the comments made here today, and this will assist us in developing the terms of reference for the peacekeeping committee, to ensure its effectiveness in improving the work of the Security Council.

My delegation fully supports the establishment of mechanisms and procedures within the Council which will enhance its ability to carry out peacekeeping operations, including consultations with troop-contributing countries. We must work, collectively and individually, to make the process work better.

Jamaica is determined that the lessons of the past must teach us the way of the future. Without seeking to ascribe responsibility for failures or give credit for successes, we are fully committed to playing our part in helping the United Nations avoid repeating the mistakes of the past while preparing ourselves for future peacekeeping operations based on a cooperative relationship between the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat. We must put our words into action.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): It is an honour for us to have you, Mr. Foreign Minister, presiding over the Council today. We are grateful to the Singapore presidency for taking the initiative in arranging this debate on a theme that is very relevant to the work of the Council and closely connected to the maintenance of international peace and security. We also applaud the Singapore presidency for the format of today's meeting: giving an opportunity to the troop-contributing countries (TCCs) to present their views ahead of the Council members. We find that some TCCs will speak later, and we hope that their views, too, will be taken into account. We are very grateful to Ambassador Mahbubani for providing a comprehensive background paper facilitating today's deliberations.

This morning, your own opening statement, Mr. President, and that of the Deputy Secretary-General, Louise Fréchette, elaborated effectively the fundamental issues of our debate. The question of cooperation with troop-contributing countries has assumed greater significance with the evolving nature of United Nations peace operations. As a major troop-contributing country, with two decades of experience in different parts of the world, Bangladesh naturally attaches substantial importance to strengthening the collaboration of the TCCs with the Council and the Secretariat. We have found the statements made by TCCs to be full of useful ideas and assessments. These statements and those of others deserve to be reflected

in a presidential statement, the issuance of which Bangladesh will support.

As a policy issue, we are strongly in favour of involving TCCs in the decisions of the Council, as per the provisions of Article 44 of the Charter of the United Nations. The Council's commitment to this effect was expressed in November 1994 and March 1996 presidential statements.

As for the format of such consultations, the two presidential statements envisaged three types of meetings: the regular Council-TCC-Secretariat meetings, ad hoc or emergency consultations between the Council and the Secretariat, and TCC-Secretariat meetings for briefings by special representatives of the Secretary-General and force commanders. It was, however, specified that these arrangements were not exclusive and could effectively take a variety of forms, including informal communication by the TCCs with the Council's President and its members.

Further, the Council, in its resolution 1327 (2000) of 13 November 2000, made specific provisions for the substantive improvement of these consultations as an institutional mechanism for strengthening cooperation. These provisions, coming as part of the follow-up to the Brahimi report, are particularly important. In the resolution, the Council decided that the existing system of consultations should be strengthened significantly; such consultations will be held through private meetings with troop-contributing countries; these meetings can be held, inter alia, at the request of a TCC; and these consultations will take place at different stages of an operation, and in particular when a change in a peacekeeping mandate is being considered. The objective of such consultations is to foster a common understanding of the situation on the ground, of the mission's mandate and of its implementation.

Clearly, the necessary provisions are there. We have to see their implementation in practice. We recognize that improvements have been made in the Council-TCC-Secretariat consultations over the years. The experience of the recent past, however, shows that there is a serious need for further progress in implementing relevant decisions and in making use of the existing mandated mechanism. Improving interaction — and I mean substantive interaction with the TCCs — is at the heart of our peacekeeping reform.

It is important to note that, in its follow-up to the Brahimi report, the Council has resolved to give peacekeeping operations clear, credible and achievable mandates. We have also recognized the critical importance of peacekeeping operations having, where appropriate and within their mandates, a credible deterrent capability. The Council has also committed itself to ensure that the mandated tasks of peacekeeping operations are appropriate to the situation on the ground. The implementation of these commitments will meet some of the fundamental concerns of the TCCs. The adoption of resolution 1327 (2000) has not brought substantive changes in the practice as yet. Our task here is to see to it that the Council commitments do not become empty rhetoric.

We have heard very loud and clear the concerns and the views of the TCCs. Sharing many of the views expressed here by them, and based on our own experience as a TCC and as a current Council member, we urge action in five areas.

First, the substantive content and nature of the Secretariat briefing must be in line with the letter and spirit of Council resolution 1327 (2000). The Secretariat should go beyond generally available information and analysis of situations. The TCCs should be taken into confidence. Political briefings should include a frank assessment of the developments, and they should tell the TCCs what they need to know. Military briefings by the Secretariat should include concept of operations and should report on key military factors such as chain of command, force structure, unity and cohesion of the force, training and equipment, risk assessment and rules of engagement.

The presidential statements that have been mentioned provide for the circulation of an informal paper or background information prior to the holding of such meetings. In addition, many TCCs feel that, if need be, the Secretariat should share briefing notes informally with them.

Secondly, Council-TCC-Secretariat consultations should be in a format that allows for the free exchange of views in a truly interactive manner. It should continue to be possible for the TCCs to exchange views with the Council through its President. Many TCCs at the meeting this morning favoured the setting up of a practical and worthwhile mechanism for consultation between the TCCs and the Security Council, in line with the Brahimi Panel recommendations. We believe

that there is a lot of merit in the proposal to set up an ad hoc subsidiary organ of the Council for effective participation of the TCCs in the decision-making process of the Council. We would favour the inclusion of this proposal in a presidential statement that the Council could adopt as a follow-up to this debate.

Thirdly, we should recognize TCCs as concerned parties in respect of a given conflict area with regard to the issues, including the question of calling for a Council meeting.

Fourthly, let me touch on Council follow-up of the consultations with the TCCs. Under the existing practice, the President is required to give to the Council, in the course of informal consultations, a summary of the views expressed at each meeting with the TCCs. Council Presidents have been making only brief references to such meetings. We believe that there is room for more substantive discussion in the Council on the content of such meetings. Secretariat support for keeping a record of such meetings should be made available as necessary.

Fifthly and finally, we should provide peace operations, where necessary, with contingency arrangements. We feel that missions in volatile situations should, from the beginning, have a contingency plan with the necessary provisions and facilities.

This last point brings me to the question of the gap in troop commitment. This constitutes a major concern for many countries, including potential troop contributors. As recognized in resolution 1327 (2000), addressing this problem will require the assumption of this shared responsibility by all Member States. Members of the Council, in particular the permanent members, cannot shy away from assuming their own. Bangladesh has proposed that the permanent members contribute 5 per cent of the troops of all peacekeeping missions, thereby showing that they intend to live up to their Charter responsibility. Consultation cannot be meaningful unless there is real partnership. Procedural refinements, as we said before, cannot resolve the substantive problem of the commitment gap.

We see Council-TCC-Secretariat consultation as part of a continuous exercise in the decision-making process on United Nations peacekeeping operations. Better consultation mechanisms involving TCCs at different stages of Council decisions on peacekeeping missions would certainly provide the key to avoiding some of the difficulties experienced in the recent past. The lessons learned should guide us through our future actions.

Mr. Kuchynski (Ukraine): At the outset, let me join previous speakers in welcoming you, Mr. Minister, and in congratulating the Singapore presidency on convening today's open debate on a very important and practical issue — strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries (TCCs). We would also like to thank the delegation of Singapore for preparing an excellent and thought-provoking background paper for this meeting. The wide response of Member States, in particular troop contributors, to this topic testifies to its significance, and, I am sure, will contribute to fostering the efficiency of United Nations peacekeeping.

My delegation approaches today's topic from a number of perspectives. From the point of view of its substance, we firmly believe that close cooperation between troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat is a decisive factor in conducting peacekeeping operations, at all of their stages, in the most effective manner possible. The role of each player in this triangle is indispensable, and therefore the importance of the right relationship between them, as well as an adequate level of understanding, mutual support and trust, cannot be overestimated. Obviously, some recent failures of United Nations peacekeeping prove that much has yet to be done to remedy the situation.

From the point of view of timing, today's discussion is being held at a most appropriate moment, given the continuous increase in United Nations peacekeeping in recent years and the growing need to expand and improve the consultative process and cooperation with the TCCs. It should be noted that last year alone, the number of United Nations peacekeepers deployed around the globe almost tripled and that the number of troop-contributing countries reached 88. Our debate acquires additional relevance in the light of the ongoing process of the reform of the United Nations peacekeeping mechanism, which was brought about by the Brahimi report and endorsed by the Millennium Summit and Security Council resolution 1318 (2000).

From the point of view of our own national experience as a troop contributor and a Security Council member, Ukraine would note that it has been involved in United Nations peacekeeping operations

for over eight years. About 13,000 military and civilian personnel from my country have discharged their noble duty for the cause of peace in 21 United Nations peacekeeping operations and missions around the globe. Last year alone, my country increased 23-fold its contribution in personnel to newly established or ongoing peacekeeping operations. As a matter of fact, there was no operation going on in 2000 without Ukraine's participation. Currently, over 1,400 representatives of my country are serving with 10 United Nations peacekeeping operations and missions.

Ukraine fully shares the widespread perception that the existing mechanism of consultations between the troop contributors, the Security Council and the Secretariat needs to be further streamlined and institutionalized. All necessary measures should be undertaken to ensure that the troop contributors are consulted at all stages of the operations. Against this background, we are largely satisfied with the real progress achieved in this field following the adoption of Security Council resolution 1327 (2000) and General Assembly resolution 55/135, both of which endorsed the recommendations of the Brahimi report. We attach great importance to the speedy and effective implementation of these resolutions. At the same time, we agree that the new arrangements formalized in that Security Council resolution have not been fully implemented.

We would also like to note with particular satisfaction an innovative step undertaken under the Jamaican presidency last July, when a meeting of the Security Council with the TCCs was called to discuss a draft resolution on the impact of HIV/AIDS on peacekeeping operations. Similarly, in our view, it would also be wise for all participants in the process to continue making full use of the procedures set out in the statement by the President of the Security Council of 4 November 1994 (S/PRST/1994/62) and of 28 March 1996 (S/PRST/1996/13), many of which are still relevant today.

My delegation regards as an achievement the formalization in resolution 1327 (2000) of a new type of private meeting with troop contributors in the format of the 4 October 2000 meeting on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone. In our view, this model of consultations, in the form of interactive and informal exchange of views between the TCCs and the Security Council members after substantive briefings by the Secretariat, should be followed in the future.

In the context of Security Council resolution 1327 (2000), we place special importance on the provision that such private meetings with TCCs be held at the latter's request. For us, the right of a troop-contributing country to request such private meetings, especially in cases of rapid deterioration of the security situation on the ground, is particularly meaningful and sensitive. Ukraine's history of participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations includes at least four such cases in which its peacekeepers were held hostages in zones of conflict.

In our view, improvements in the practice of TCC meetings, and thus of cooperation with them, can be made by all partners in the process. First of all, this relates to the troop contributors themselves. It is evident that the effectiveness of these meetings depends on their readiness and willingness to hold an active dialogue with the Security Council members and the Secretariat.

The active participation of Security Council members in such meetings is also extremely important to ensure that the Council issues clearly defined, credible and achievable mandates for peacekeeping operations, taking into account the views, advice and expertise of TCCs.

The Secretariat's role in the process of consultations with the TCCs could also be improved, in our view, through regular briefings at a higher level of expertise and analysis and the circulation of informal background papers well in advance. We feel that more frequent invitations to TCC meetings of commanders of peacekeeping operations and/or special representatives of the Secretary-General could also be very productive.

As regards other mechanisms to strengthen the link between the Security Council and TCCs, we think that the idea of creating a working group of the Council on peacekeeping operations to address these issues deserves our further consideration. My delegation stands ready to discuss this idea in practical terms.

Finally, we believe that the presentations made earlier today, which contained profound analysis and an array of very practical suggestions, will become the subject of very careful study by Council members. We hope that the implementation of these proposals will create a new basis for increased cooperation between the Security Council, the troop contributors and the

Secretariat. My delegation intends to continue its worthy contribution to this lofty task.

Mr. Gatilov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome you, Mr. President, to today's meeting, and we are grateful to the delegation of Singapore for choosing this item for our discussion today. This will certainly help us improve United Nations peacekeeping potential.

We agree with the general view that strengthening various forms of cooperation with the troop-contributing countries is an important way of enhancing the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping. This should be the main objective of our common endeavour.

A series of steps has recently been taken in this direction, which include, most notably, the report of the Panel of experts under Ambassador Brahimi and, subsequently, Security Council resolutions 1318 (2000) and 1327 (2000), as well as General Assembly resolution 55/135. It is significant that these documents confirm the Security Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. From that perspective, they have defined specific ways of improving our interaction with troop contributors.

In preparing for today's meeting, we analysed the criticism often voiced against the Security Council in this connection. It seems to us that we could define the criticism as follows: first, complaints that meetings with troop contributors are not held in a timely manner, particularly in cases of deteriorating situations on the ground for peacekeeping operations; secondly, complaints about inadequate information provided by the United Nations Secretariat; and thirdly, complaints about the absence of assurances that the views of contributors will be taken into account by the Security Council when it prepares the relevant decisions.

We believe that the specific measures agreed in the past half year are in fact geared towards resolving these matters. It is not important what words are used to describe the efforts we are making to improve interaction with the troop-contributing countries. It can be called institutionalization or formalization, but the main point is how useful the impact of our activities will be.

It is primarily a question of the Security Council's willingness to strengthen significantly the existing system of consultation by holding closed or private meetings with troop-contributing countries, including at their request, without detriment to the Security Council's established rules of procedures. We believe that this will help resolve this issue of having timely meetings.

As for inadequate information, we believe that the Secretariat, through the statement made by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Guéhenno, in November 2000, in the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly, expressed its willingness to deal with this complaint. We hope that carrying out that obligation that he voiced will meet the legitimate concerns of the troop-contributing countries.

As for assurances that Member States' views will be taken into account in decision-making on deploying peacekeeping operations, we must realize that no one has any such assurances, including the Council members, for decisions taken in the Security Council are, as a rule, the result of a compromise that is reached, and everybody must concede a little in order to achieve the main objective.

This problem requires serious reflection. In this connection, we thought that the following possible action might be considered.

National contingents of troop contributors in a peacekeeping operation might make use of the experience they have acquired on the ground and report their views about any particular aspect of the conduct of the operation to the force commander and to the Secretary-General's special representative, who would then take this information into account in preparing the relevant reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council. It is no secret that it is those reports, as experience has shown, that are the real catalyst for introducing any changes in the mandates of peacekeeping operations. We believe that this would be an effective approach. It would work, and we further believe it would not involve additional bureaucratization of decision-making in the Council. We could thus have a new mechanism for interaction with troop contributing countries, namely, meetings of the members of the Council, the troop contributors and the Secretariat in a new format, more in-depth briefings from the Secretariat and feedback from the national contingents in a peacekeeping operation.

Of course, these are just preliminary points, and they may be supplemented, for example, within the

context of discussions in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

We have listened carefully to the statements made by troop-contributing countries, and we note that a number of their proposals as to how to enhance United Nations peacekeeping are in keeping with our approach. Inter alia, we would regard India's proposal on making more use of the Military Staff Committee, in line with resolution 1327 (2000), as an obligation to study ways of exploiting the potential of the Military Staff Committee in the interests of strengthening the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations.

Furthermore, we think that these ideas might be useful in developing interaction with troop contributors. We also think that this proposal and many others that were made could be carefully studied in a working group of the Security Council on peacekeeping issues.

For our part, we wish to confirm our intention to cooperate constructively with all other countries with a view to improving United Nations peacekeeping.

Mr. Ryan (Ireland): I would first like to commend warmly the outgoing members of the Council — Argentina, Canada, Malaysia, Namibia and the Netherlands — for their excellent contribution to the work of the Council over the past two years. As an incoming member of the Council, Ireland is fully committed to carrying out the tasks with which the Member States have entrusted us.

We warmly welcome today's debate under your presidency, Mr. Minister, and we particularly support the format. As was noted by many speakers this morning, this is a very timely initiative of the Singaporean presidency which responds to the concerns of many troop-contributing countries (TCCs) that the Security Council must do more to take into account the views of TCCs.

Ireland associates itself with, and supports, the statement made this morning by Sweden on behalf of the European Union. To those comments, I would like to add the following points in my national capacity.

While the order in which I take the floor today reflects Ireland's current status as a member of the Security Council, that position is a temporary one. This is in contrast to our position as a significant troop contributor, which, over the last 40 years, can reasonably be described as permanent. My remarks reflect, therefore, the interests of both a member of the Security Council and a committed troop contributor.

It is entirely appropriate for the Security Council to discuss in this way with TCCs how their concerns can best be taken on board by the Council. It is vital that the Council engage with and listen to TCCs before taking any decisions affecting the mandate of a peacekeeping operation.

Under Article 24 of the Charter, Member States confer on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and for carrying this function out on their behalf.

The Security Council has certain obligations under the Charter in this regard. The creation of peacekeeping operations is among the most important of its responsibilities. But, in fulfilling its obligations, the Council also has a responsibility to take into account the views of the countries which contribute troops to those missions.

Troop contributors have a particular concern to ensure that the mandates adopted by the Security Council are clear, credible and achievable. This point should be readily understood by all, including by those Members of the Organization which commit their troops to United Nations command and those which are sometimes reluctant to do so.

The point made earlier by India about the high rate of peacekeepers provided by developing countries is a telling one which should give rise to reflection.

As a contributor to many United Nations missions over the years, Ireland is convinced that we, and other TCCs, can provide essential, practical input into the work of the Council when it is considering the mandate of a mission.

We agree with the Brahimi report that TCCs should be consulted at the very initial stages, and at all stages throughout an operation, most particularly where a change of mandate is involved.

Resolution 1327 (2000) is the most significant element to date in the framework for consultations between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop contributors.

We take a practical approach to what needs to be done. We look at the useful mechanisms which are already in place, ask how they can be used more

effectively and then question what more needs to be done.

It is important to register that consultations have improved dramatically over the past two years. The new Military Adviser, General Ford, has made a particular contribution since his appointment. The Secretariat must be commended for this effort.

The Military Adviser must continue to brief the Security Council on military matters. The Council needs to have at its disposal the best information available to it when making decisions, and the presence of the Military Adviser is crucial to this requirement.

The Military Adviser should also be available to brief TCCs. Indeed, we welcome the openness and the receptiveness expressed earlier today by Deputy Secretary-General Fréchette on behalf of the Secretariat in this regard.

The Secretariat now circulates their briefing notes to contributors. This is a positive development. We ask that both military and political briefing notes be made available to troop contributors well in advance of consultations and that every effort be made to ensure that briefings are as comprehensive as possible.

We, the States Members of the United Nations and the Secretariat, must draw on lessons learned from recent experiences. We suggest, as a matter of course, that when a mandate is completed, there should be routine discussion with troop contributors, the Council and the Secretariat on lessons learned. The President of the Security Council, representatives of the Secretariat and, importantly, all members of the Council should be present at a senior level at all consultations with troop contributors. This requirement is very usefully reaffirmed in resolution 1327 (2000). I wish to underline the importance that we attach to this.

This requires troop contributors to take the consultations seriously, to be present at an appropriate level and to participate actively. For useful interaction to occur, all sides must become and remain involved. All of this involves resources. The Secretariat requires manpower to respond to all of these demands.

My delegation has been disappointed at the response of the membership to the request of the Secretary-General for resources to implement the recommendations of the Brahimi Panel. During the main segment of this session of the General Assembly, less than half of the posts requested by the Secretary-General were approved. Many of those posts would have improved the quality of service which the Secretariat provides troop contributors and which we demand of the Secretariat. If we are serious about improving United Nations peacekeeping and the manner in which troop contributors are engaged in the system, it follows that we must be prepared to finance the necessary posts. If we are not prepared to accept the recommendations of the Secretary-General as to what he requires to do a better job, there is something hollow in those demands we hear for a greater contribution from the Secretariat.

My delegation has listened very carefully to the debate so far. We have heard several delegations call for the creation of a permanent structure which would allow troop contributors to remain in ongoing dialogue with the Security Council about the preparation, amendment and implementation of peacekeeping mandates in which their troops are involved. We support such a concept and look forward to discussing specific proposals, such as that which Canada intends to bring forward and that which the United Kingdom has proposed.

For our part, we feel that a useful purpose would be served if the Security Council were to put in place a structure for ongoing dialogue with significant troop contributors. This arrangement could operate both vertically, in relation to individual peacekeeping missions, and horizontally, in relation to cross-cutting issues applying to peacekeeping more generally. Picking up the point made by Australia this morning, these new structures should not be burdensome, nor should they affect the ability of the Council to make timely decisions. However, we would not, for the moment, wish to see this mechanism replace the current provisions under which the Council has a formal consultation with troop contributors prior to each mandate renewal.

Many other interesting proposals have been put forward during today's discussions. We look forward to discussing these in more detail with troop contributors and within the Security Council.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all, the Chinese delegation wishes to express its gratitude to you, Sir, for presiding over this meeting and its appreciation of the efforts made by the delegation of Singapore for its convening.

With a history of more than 50 years, United Nations peacekeeping operations have developed into a comprehensive and complex integrated project. From the United Nations point of view, as the authorizer of peacekeeping operations and the central organ for making decisions on their establishment and deployment and on the development of relevant policies and guidelines, the Security Council is at the heart of all such operations from start to finish. The Secretariat and troop-contributing countries (TCCs) shoulder the important task of implementing the mandates of the Security Council.

For many years, the troop-contributing countries' cooperation in and support for United Nations peacekeeping operations have been an effective guarantee of the Security Council's ability to perform its function of maintaining international peace and security. Their contributions are evident to all. At the same time, there is much room for improvement in terms of coordination with troop-contributing countries. In the case of Sierra Leone in particular, the peacekeeping operation faced more difficulties because of the lack of sufficient consultation and coordination with the troop contributors when the Council changed and adjusted the mandate of the peacekeeping Mission there. This lesson should be learned and remembered well in order better to prevent the recurrence of similar problems in the future.

The success of a peacekeeping operation depends not only on the clear and sound division of work, but also on good communication and cooperation between the decision maker and the task performer. Therefore, the Chinese delegation actively supports the strengthening of cooperation between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries, as well as between the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries. It maintains that importance should be attached to maintaining regular consultations with troop-contributing countries and to listening to their pertinent views at all stages of the creation and implementation of a peacekeeping operation.

In recent years, Council members have held close consultations with troop-contributing countries in the form of TCC meetings on questions related to peacekeeping operations, which have played a role in ensuring the smooth implementation of peacekeeping operations. We believe that such a mechanism should continue and be improved upon and that, without prejudice to the efficiency of the work of the Security Council, more flexible forms of exchange and communication with troop-contributing countries should be considered in order to inspire free exchanges of views. Troop-contributing countries should also be encouraged to express their concerns to the Council in a more timely and flexible manner. All this should become an important component of the effort to improve the working methods and increase the transparency of the Security Council.

This morning, representatives of the troop-contributing countries raised many questions that deserve the Security Council's consideration. They also made many good suggestions. We hope that there will be follow-up action in this regard.

As to strengthening cooperation between the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries, we support the establishment of closer partnerships between the Secretariat and troop contributors and the Secretariat should do its utmost to provide conveniences to the latter. We would recommend that the Secretariat continue to give timely and accurate briefings to troop-contributing countries, which should be in line with those given to the Security Council. I would emphasize that the Secretariat, in dispatching and deploying peacekeeping operations, has done a great deal of work over the years and that its contribution deserves our commendation.

The Chinese delegation endorses the proposal to establish a Security Council working group on peacekeeping operations. In our view, one of the primary tasks of that working group should be to explore ways to strengthen cooperation between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries while learning from the successes and failures of recent peacekeeping operations. The scope of the tasks to be dealt with by the working group should include how to improve the content and form of meetings with troop contributors, additional ways to strengthen cooperation between the Council and troop-contributing countries, and how to encourage and give full play to the initiatives of troop-contributing countries.

The working group should also listen to the views of non-members, and to those of troop-contributing countries in particular — and this should be done in a flexible way. The Chinese delegation will take an active part in the endeavours of the working group and will join hands with all Member States — especially

troop-contributing countries — to strengthen cooperation between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries so as to make United Nations peacekeeping operations more effective and successful.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): Norway would like to join other delegations in welcoming this debate. We commend Singapore's initiative, and we commend you, Mr. Minister, for coming to New York to preside over this important meeting.

The United Nations capacity to conduct effective peacekeeping operations is crucial in order for the Security Council to fulfil its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. The Brahimi report has pointed out important challenges in that regard, and includes timely recommendations that have Norway's full support.

Norway remains firmly committed to United Nations peacekeeping and to supporting the primary role of the Security Council with regard to peace and stability. Over 1,200 Norwegian soldiers are serving in United Nations-mandated peace operations today. One per cent of our total civilian police force now serves under the flag of the United Nations. We are working to improve our capacity to participate with military and civilian personnel and resources in ongoing and future United Nations operations.

As an elected Council member and as a troop contributor, Norway is very conscious of the need for close cooperation between the Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat in order for the United Nations to be successful in peacekeeping. We therefore warmly welcome the initiative of Singapore to arrange this open debate. We highly appreciate your presence here today, Mr. President.

In the Council, Norway will continue to advocate transparency and openness towards non-members, in line with Nordic positions on Security Council reform. Improving arrangements for consultations with troop contributors is part and parcel of that effort. This goes to the heart of key issues raised in the Brahimi report: the need for clear, credible and achievable mandates; and the need to close the commitment gap between adopted mandates and available troops and resources.

Norway is adamant that countries providing troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations must be given due opportunities to participate in the preparation and revision of mandates. We need mechanisms that address the legitimate interests of troop contributors during all phases of an operation. That will promote, not hamper, the process of preparing and implementing achievable mandates.

We therefore welcome resolution 1327 (2000), which states the Council's commitment to strengthen significantly the existing system of consultations. While the arrangements established during the 1990s led to obvious improvements for troop-contributors, it nevertheless became clear that closer interaction was needed. The decision to hold private meetings with troop-contributing countries, including at their request, at various stages of peace-keeping operations, is thus an important step. Such meetings should become an integral part of both the Council's and the Secretariat's planning and conduct of peace operations.

We welcome the presidency's initiative to invite troop contributors to consultations prior to the Secretary-General's release of his new report on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. This is a practical initiative that is in accordance with what we are debating here today.

It is now up to all of us — troop contributors, Council members and non-members alike — to make maximum use of the joint meetings with the Secretariat in order to utilize their potential for successful interaction, decision-making input and information-sharing. This requires the active participation of all parties involved at the appropriate level.

Looking ahead, we believe that due consideration should be given to the proposal of the Brahimi Panel to establish ad hoc subsidiary organs of the Security Council, as provided for in Article 29 of the Charter, as a way to institutionalize troop-contributing countries' advice to the Council during the mandate-formulation process. Due consideration should also be given to the possibility that regional organizations taking part in United Nations peace operations with coordinated forces could participate in consultations with the Council and troop-contributing countries.

We are ready to consider proposals to establish a more permanent mechanism under the Security Council in order to follow-up the recommendations of the Brahimi report and other issues related to peacekeeping. Troop contributors must be provided with satisfactory ways of participating in such a follow-up effort. We must all strive towards transparency in our work on peacekeeping operations.

Norway believes that countries that have committed military units to an operation should have access to Secretariat briefings to the Security Council during the existence of an operation on matters affecting the security of their personnel. In order for the Secretariat to fulfil the crucial task of providing information to troop-contributing countries, it must be given the necessary resources to gather, analyse and distribute relevant information in a timely manner. This is of no little importance to smaller countries with limited information-gathering capacities of their own. We must strengthen the planning capacity of the Secretariat in order to provide troop-contributing countries with the necessary material as a basis for decision-making.

Norway welcomes the actions already taken in the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretariat to follow-up the Brahimi report. I have listened very carefully to the legitimate concerns and concrete proposals presented today by important troop contributors, including Jordan, India, Fiji and Nigeria. Norway is determined to work closely and constructively with them, both in the Council and in the Assembly, and with other members and troop contributors to ensure implementation of the Panel's recommendations.

In conclusion, my delegation would also like to thank all the outgoing members of the Council for their contributions to the work of the Council during the past two years.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): France associates itself fully with the statement made earlier today by the Permanent Representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union. I would like to review briefly some of the items that in our judgement are essential to understanding the stakes involved in this issue, from the Security Council's point of view.

First of all I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this debate two months after the adoption of resolution 1327 (2000). The views expressed by the troop-contributing countries earlier today provide us with a good idea of the best way to put into practice the commitments we made under that resolution.

I will not reprise in detail the reasons why it is indispensable to enhance consultations between the Council and the troop-contributing countries at every stage of the preparations for and conduct of peacekeeping operations. Such cooperation in fact makes it possible to increase the unity of purpose of operations and cohesiveness in their conduct. This cooperation must promote a shared understanding of the objectives and of the risks involved, as well as of the strategies to be implemented to successfully carry out peacekeeping operations. The willingness of troop-contributing countries to commit their troops in the field depends on such cooperation. As the Brahimi report forcefully recalls,

> "The Security Council and the Secretariat also must be able to win the confidence of troop contributors that the strategy and concept of operations for a new mission are sound." (*S/2000/809, para. 52*)

We know well that such confidence can be cultivated only through a genuine partnership between the Council which decides on mandates, in keeping with its responsibilities under the Charter, and the troop-contributing countries, which implement these mandates. There are several possible approaches to seeking such a partnership.

I would like to recall first the very useful role that groups of friends play when such groups are open and when they bring together the members of the Council, the main troop contributors, the countries of the region and possibly foreign donors as well. For instance, throughout the existence of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) the Group of Friends of the Central African Republic, which brings together all these different categories of countries, has made it possible to share information and to have a shared understanding of the stakes and objectives of the mission, of the situation on the ground and of the relationship with the Central African authorities. I am convinced that the existence and work of this Group have been one of the factors in the success of MINURCA.

Secondly, the meetings between all the Council members and all the troop contributors are the standard approach to such a partnership. I listened closely to the criticisms that several Member States made earlier concerning the often pro forma and not very useful character of these meetings. I understand their frustrations, and I must say that I share their opinions. For my part, over the past few months I have argued in favour of organizing, more and more systematically, private meetings with the troop-contributing countries,

along the lines of the meeting that the Council held on 4 October for the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL).

That was an exemplary meeting in our opinion, because three conditions were met. First, the members of the Council and the main troop contributors were represented at a level of high responsibility. Secondly, the information provided by the Secretariat concerning the situation and the possibilities was the same information that had been given to the Council members the day before during consultations. Thirdly, an interactive, candid and substantial dialogue — without pointless formalities — ensued between the Council members and the troop contributors. If all the meetings with troop contributors were to proceed in this manner, I think that many of the frustrations expressed today would fade away.

Several Member States have suggested that subsidiary bodies of the Council be established to better organize consultation between the Security Council and the troop contributors. This idea should be examined with an open mind, while remaining aware — as I have just said regarding the meeting of 4 October — that what matters is not so much the formal machinery as the use to which it is put.

In conclusion, I would like to respond to troop-contributing Member States — I am thinking in particular of India, which made a brilliant statement, and Jordan and some others — that lamented that there are members of the Council that have not committed themselves to contributing troops under the same conditions as other States. The French delegation did not take this criticism personally. France has participated in many United Nations peacekeeping operations. In 1993, it was even the leading contributor worldwide, with more than 9,000 personnel engaged. With 98 deaths and hundreds of wounded, France is, after India, the country that has given the greatest number of lives to the service of peacekeeping. Today France is participating in 10 United Nations operations and in two additional operations authorized by the Security Council — in Bosnia and Kosovo. In all, more than 8,700 military staff and 200 police are participating directly in the implementation of Security Council mandates. These few statistics are enough to demonstrate that France has good reasons to understand the concerns of troop contributors, and, along with all the members of the Council, France wishes to respond to these concerns as effectively as possible.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to offer you, Sir, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore, the greetings of my delegation and to tell you how pleased we are to see you presiding over this meeting. I would like to highlight the importance of this open debate, as well as the approach of hearing first from the troop-contributing countries and then from the members of the Security Council.

Earlier today we heard several delegations' statements on this topic. In this statement we propose to refer to some of the ideas that were raised. We would like to express thanks for the words of welcome that several representatives and meeting participants addressed to those of us who are new Council members.

In most cases the member countries of the Security Council and the troop-contributing countries are not the same. This is why it is necessary, first, that the Security Council establish permanent, appropriate and relevant mechanisms for involving troop-contributing countries. Secondly, those countries should take proper advantage of these mechanisms. This morning one delegation referred to a lack of active participation on the part of the troop-contributing countries during the regular consultations.

Each mission authorized by the Security Council should develop its own mechanisms for cooperation and consultation with the troop-contributing countries. In some cases, a routine meeting would suffice. In other, more complex situations, it would be necessary to resort to more sophisticated consultation mechanisms, which could be developed and fine-tuned with experience.

We would like to reiterate what was stated by several delegations this morning: that consultations should be convened with enough lead time and should be announced in the *Journal*, so that the decisions taken by the Council could benefit from the viewpoints expressed by countries prepared to provide troops to peacekeeping operations. We would therefore recommend that every report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on developments affecting missions in the field include his assessment of consultations being held with the troop-contributing countries, be they actual or potential contributors.

We would like also to express our support for reviving the Military Staff Committee, with a broadened mandate that would reflect the concerns voiced this morning, failing which we should establish a standing institutional mechanism for consultation and cooperation with the troop-contributing countries.

I should now like to touch on the importance of promoting closer cooperation between the Security Council and countries that are potential troop contributors. I believe that the Council should ask itself whether it is doing everything to motivate Members of the United Nations to become troop contributors. It goes without saying that consultations with potential contributors would have to be different from those held with countries that are already contributing troops. In the former case, it is a matter of presenting a potential contributor with enough information to motivate it to participate. Clearly, the work of the Security Council should be more proactive.

Why do some countries not contribute troops? In some cases, internal security issues constrain contribution, and clearly there is little that the Security Council can do to counteract such a sovereign decision. However, there are other cases in which internal political pressures prevent a State from becoming a contributor, and there may even be cases in which such a decision is not taken because of a lack of information.

In the latter cases, the Security Council, in coordination with the Secretariat, could have a positive influence if it were to be more active. It could, for instance, circulate information on the proposed mission, the means available to achieve its aims, and the risks and benefits involved in participating in its implementation. National Governments should have the necessary information to be able to justify publicly their decision to contribute troops, observers or equipment. To this end, the Secretariat could work more actively with the missions to ensure that information is properly channelled to capitals.

In conclusion, I should like to stress the timeliness of consultations, a matter referred to by several delegations this morning. Troop-contributing countries must be consulted at the beginning of a mission, when there are proposed changes to its mandate, when new components are introduced into it, and whenever it becomes necessary to modify the rules of engagement.

We feel that these circumstances should define a minimum level of consultation for streamlined management of the peacekeeping operations authorized by the Security Council. The Council should cultivate a relationship of mutual trust with troop-contributing countries, which will help to prevent the taking of unilateral decisions by troops and bring about greater cohesion among the forces deployed in the field.

Mr. Neewoor (Mauritius): We commend Singapore for its initiative to hold this open debate today on the important subject of strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries (TCCs). Mr. Minister, we deeply appreciate your presence in the Council and the fact that you are presiding over the discussions on this important subject.

Allow me also to thank all of the delegations that have addressed kind words of felicitations to us following our recent election to the Security Council to serve a two-year term as a non-permanent member. I would like to assure all delegations that Mauritius is determined to contribute effectively to the work of the Council and to bring its perspective to the deliberations, keeping in mind the common concerns and aspirations of the general membership of the United Nations.

We also thank the outgoing members of the Council, namely Argentina, Canada, Malaysia, Namibia and the Netherlands, for their contribution to the work of the Council during their tenure.

I wish to take this opportunity to first of all express the appreciation of my delegation to all of the troop-contributing countries for making their troops available so that the United Nations can fulfil its fundamental task of maintaining peace and security throughout the world. We are conscious of the great sacrifice the TCCs make in deploying their men and women in conflict situations in unfamiliar territories on behalf of the United Nations. We believe that there can be no doubt whatsoever that TCCs, which risk the lives of their personnel, must be fully involved in the decision-making process at every stage of a mandate that concerns them.

During the morning session, we listened to statements by a number of important TCCs, which not only expressed their concerns about the numerous problems peacekeeping operations entail, but also made many valuable suggestions to improve the situation.

The traumatic experience of the United Nations in failing to prevent genocide in Rwanda in 1994 and to protect the inhabitants of Srebrenica ultimately triggered the setting up of the independent high-level Panel to undertake a thorough review of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Today we have the Brahimi report, which is an important road map that will enable our Organization to achieve better results from more effective peacekeeping operations in the coming years.

It goes without saying that greater cooperation between TCCs, the Secretariat and the Security Council should yield better results for our peacekeeping operations. The success and increased efficiency of any peacekeeping operation can be ensured through effective coordination and management involving all concerned parties. The Brahimi report has clearly recommended greater cooperation between the Security Council and the TCCs. The Security Council affirmed in resolution 1318 (2000) its determination, at the level of heads of State and Government, to adopt clearly defined, credible, achievable and appropriate mandates. Through resolution 1327 (2000), the Security Council confirmed its commitment to holding private meetings with TCCs at various stages of the establishment and implementation of peacekeeping operations.

The holding of these private meetings is undoubtedly marked progress towards greater cooperation between the Council and the TCCs. However, we Security Council members need to address seriously the calls and concerns we heard from TCCs earlier in this meeting, particularly with regard to the legitimate request regarding the institutionalization of Security Council and TCC cooperation.

We fully subscribe to the view that the Security Council should consult with TCCs during the formulation of mandates. Today the majority of troops come from developing countries because developed countries are more and more reluctant to risk their military personnel abroad. We in the Security Council cannot afford to see a dwindling of troops from developing countries as well in the years ahead, especially when everyone knows that more and more peacekeeping operations are being undertaken by the United Nations. The concerns of TCCs should be taken very seriously.

My delegation wishes to join with other delegations which have, over the years and today also, advocated the institutionalization of consultations between TCCs and the Security Council through the establishment of an ad hoc subsidiary organ of the Council, as provided for in Article 29 of the Charter. This matter should be fully discussed within the Council at an early date.

TCCs have an important role to play since their military contingents are called upon to discharge responsibilities professionally, in accordance with the mission's mandate. Although the Security Council is largely responsible for designing peacekeeping operations, the implementation of the mandate of operations rests mainly with the troops deployed on the ground. In the Security Council, we should ensure that TCCs are thoroughly consulted whenever a change in the mandate of an operation is contemplated. This can best be achieved within the ambit of the proposed subsidiary organ. It is true that if TCCs are not consulted in the evolution of a mandate, it will be difficult for the TCCs to have a clear assessment of possible developments on the ground.

The success of any project lies largely in the degree of genuine cooperation and consultation between the project designers and the executants of the project. We believe it is essential to involve TCCs in consultations at the earliest stage possible. During these early consultations, potential TCCs should be provided with the information that would enable them to decide on their eventual participation on the ground.

The Secretariat needs to thoroughly and continually brief TCCs on all aspects, including the situation on the ground, risk assessment of the operation and the security threats involved. At an early stage of consultation, it is also very useful to take on board inputs from the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. These steps would create a better understanding between the Secretariat and TCCs. Only if there is enhanced confidence between all stakeholders will the TCCs be able to convince their national legislatures and public to commit troops.

Peace operations should be well manned and well equipped in order to minimize risks and failures. In this regard, the Secretariat has the prime responsibility of identifying the best trained and most experienced troops for a ground operation. While the Secretariat

should carefully assess the overall preparedness of potential troops prior to deployment, TCCs should also understand that one of the ways to ensure the success of an operation is through the commitment of well-trained contingents, with appropriate equipment and supplies needed to sustain their personnel on the ground. The TCCs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should work closely within a framework of military cooperation to ensure that the troops deployed have the optimum capacity to discharge their duties efficiently. Here we agree with the suggestion of India that the Military Staff Committee should be revived.

In conclusion, today's open debate has given us deep insight into the need for greater cooperation between the Security Council, the Secretariat and the TCCs. My delegation has no doubt that the Security Council must seriously address the issues raised by the TCCs and take appropriate measures to accommodate the concerns expressed in this open debate.

Mr. Ouane (Mali) (*spoke in French*): Mali is pleased to see the Security Council meeting under your presidency, Mr. Minister, in this important public debate on strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries (TCCs). I wish to thank Ambassador Mahbubani and his team for having taken the initiative of organizing this debate on an issue that is relevant to us all.

My delegation was pleased to see that the countries speaking in this debate represented a very broad range of countries that, like Mali, have participated honourably in United Nations peacekeeping operations throughout the years. It will be very important to take their opinions into account.

Mali would like to contribute to this collective reflection by stressing the following points. First, we think that it is our very real obligation to encourage genuine dialogue with troop-contributing countries. Of course, the process of holding consultations between the Security Council, the Secretariat and the troop contributors means holding meetings in accordance with the guidelines contained in the presidential statements of 4 November 1994 and 28 March 1996.

But there are certain limits in this system, as we can see from the problems encountered by the United Nations Protection Force in the Balkans, the United Nations Operation in Somalia and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone. We must find and improve consultation procedures that are in keeping with the Charter and that allow troop contributors to be properly heard when they speak about the possible use of their contingents.

Accordingly, we welcome the adoption of Security Council resolution 1327 (2000) of 13 November 2000 and General Assembly resolution 55/135 of 8 December 2000, which endorsed the recommendations made by the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations with regard to strengthening consultations between the troop contributors, the Security Council and the Secretariat.

As the excellent working paper provided by Singapore for this occasion points out, we must strengthen consultations and exchange of information with troop contributors on peacekeeping operations, including planning, management and coordination. In this connection, we would advocate more public meetings like the one held on 4 October 2000 on UNAMSIL. We agree with the view that in this way we would be able to build up trust that is essential if Member States are to provide the necessary resources and shoulder the risks involved in deploying peacekeepers.

But — and this is my second comment — this very necessary trust must be based on a true partnership between those who decide and those who implement. As has been recalled time and again, this close cooperation was lacking in the case of UNAMSIL, and also in many earlier operations. Drawing lessons from the past, and to prevent any recurrence of crisis, Mali would like us to be able to invoke Articles 43 and 44 of the Charter whenever useful and whenever possible. Basically, it is a question of inviting the Member State providing the armed forces to — and I quote Article 44 — "participate in decisions of the Security Council concerning the employment of contingents of that Member's armed forces". This is what should happen, including in all aspects of planning peacekeeping mission tasks, in the evolution of mandates and with regard to the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel.

Along those same lines I would like to mention here the relations of confidence between the Security Council and the Economic Community of West African States, which they decided to strengthen, to develop, in a spirit of partnership after their meeting on 21 June 2000.

Similarly, we noted with great interest proposals made in the general debate in the Fourth Committee in November 2000 on the question of peacekeeping operations in all its aspects. These proposals have been repeated by their authors here today. In large part we share those views, especially what was said by India, Jordan and Pakistan.

To ensure success for United Nations peacekeeping operations — this is my third and last point — it is important to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity to plan, deploy and conduct operations. Here, we fully support measures recommended in the Brahimi report and supported by the Secretary-General in his implementation report of 20 October 2000.

In conclusion, I would just like to say that as far as Mali is concerned, the United Nations can have no future as a guarantor of international peace and security unless it achieves the triptych of dialogue, partnership and modernization.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Romania. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ducaru (Romania): As this is the first time for me to address this distinguished and vital organ of the United Nations, allow me to extend my congratulations to all the newly elected members, particularly the Singapore presidency for the month of January. It is my great pleasure to welcome warmly the initiative of Minister Jayakumar and Ambassador Mahbubani to keep alive a valuable practice by organizing, during its presidency of the Council, an open debate on strengthening cooperation among the Security Council, the Secretary-General and the troop-contributing countries.

We are grateful to the current presidency of the Council, not only for their initiative, which offers us the opportunity to address a crucial issue for the future success of any United Nations peacekeeping operation, but also for the very comprehensive and sound policy papers we were provided with, both as food for thought and as a good starter for our debate.

My country fully endorses the substantive statement presented by the Swedish presidency of the European Union on the importance of strengthening the cooperation with troop-contributing countries. We share the vision that the United Nations, which bears the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, must reinforce its cooperation with regional organizations and institutions, such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which have their own experience and competencies in managing current crises and preventing the eruption of new ones.

During her one-year mandate as OSCE Chair-in-Office, Romania is committed to act towards an improved dialogue and cooperation with the United Nations, which is the Organization which has indeed a unique global vocation, as well as with all the other governmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions which may contribute to solving those problems that Europe is still coping with, especially in its south-eastern corner and the Caucasus.

As a troop-contributing country to several United Nations peacekeeping operations in different parts of the world, Romania attaches a great importance to the recent demarches undertaken by both the Secretary-General and the Security Council aimed at rethinking and reforming the aims and the means to successfully carry out the Organization's missions. We are strongly encouraged to see that some of the recommendations included in the Brahimi report and properly endorsed by the Secretary-General and the Security Council have already been implemented or are on track for implementation.

In our view, while recognizing the importance of the role that is to be played by the major international bodies and the major individual countries, it goes without saying that taking into account the contributions which are brought to the process by all partners represents a precondition for success in conducting multinational operations. We consider that a three-pillar cooperation mechanism among the Secretary-General, the Security Council and the troop-contributing countries needs to be designed. In our opinion, it is high time to move on from a mechanism working on an ad hoc basis to a more structured and institutionalized one that is able to offer more transparency and credibility to our common endeavours. Such a mechanism, meant to provide greater transparency and efficiency in conducting peace operations, should operate from the early stage of designing and adopting the mandate and until the very end of the mission implementation. Welcoming resolution 1327 (2000) of 13 November 2000, in the spirit of that important document, as highlighted in annex I, it is our conviction that the establishment of

this crucial consultation mechanism should take into consideration the views of troop-contributing countries regarding the modalities of functioning before such a structure is institutionalized.

Romania has participated in United Nations peacekeeping operations since April 1991, with a peak momentum reached between September 1995 and July 1997, when almost 1,000 Romanian Blue Helmets were deployed in Angola, making us number eight in the list of troop-contributing countries.

At the same time, I would like to inform you that the new Romanian Government has included among its top priorities the elaboration of a comprehensive strategy concerning the participation of our country in United Nations-led peace operations. The main goal of this strategy, taking into account the recommendations included in the recently adopted report of the special committee on peacekeeping operations in analysing the Brahimi report, is to increase both the quality and the amount of our contributions, as well as to ensure a higher level of readiness, capability and diversity.

The Romanian Government sees our country's participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations not only as a contribution in terms of our commitment towards the world Organization, but also as an important task, meant to facilitate the achievement of some of our political objectives. Making our own contributions to the United Nations efforts towards global and regional peace and security, we are looking forward to increasing Romania's participation in political and military cooperation with the main European and Euro-Atlantic bodies and individual countries belonging to them.

Allow me to recall that Romania was one of the countries that, on the occasion of the Millennium Summit and responding to the call of the Secretary-General to support the reform of United Nations peacekeeping operations, have voluntarily decided to gradually increase their financial contributions to the United Nations peacekeeping budget. That decision, which has been taken in a period of difficult economic transition, emphasizes Romania's will to contribute to the financial burden-sharing efforts of the Member States.

Before concluding my remarks, I would like to say that we fully support the ongoing process aimed at reforming the United Nations peace operations, initiated by the Security Council and the Secretary-General, and we are ready to bring our own ideas reflecting the experience we have accumulated in the field of United Nations-led peace operations.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Senegal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ka (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on the accession of your country, Singapore, to the presidency of the Security Council for this month, which fortuitously marks the onset of your membership in the Council, of the new century and of the new millennium. These coincidences augur well for the Security Council and I wish to seize the opportunity of this first open meeting of the year to wish you and the other members of the Council, particularly the new ones, every success in discharging your difficult and sensitive mission in the service of world peace.

My delegation also wishes to welcome your very timely initiative of devoting this meeting to an exchange of views on the need to strengthen cooperation between the Security Council, the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries in the context of joining relevant forces to improve the effectiveness and credibility of peacekeeping operations. Such trilateral cooperation has become virtually mandatory today because peacekeeping doctrine has undergone a spectacular evolution in recent years.

A decade ago, the role of United Nations forces in peacekeeping was often confined to separating parties to a conflict in order to monitor and ensure respect for the implementation of a ceasefire or peace agreement between warring States. Such operations were relatively easier to manage because they required much less in terms of material and financial means and human resources.

Nowadays, and most particularly in the past 10 years, the concept of peacekeeping has evolved considerably in confronting a new generation of conflicts and situations that were previously unknown. These multidimensional operations have progressively become the norm. Unfortunately, the United Nations is entering unfamiliar territory in complex situations in which there is not even a clearly defined political and institutional framework, such as in Kosovo or East Timor. This requires the United Nations to be able to strengthen its capacity to carry out such new missions

appropriately, with the support of well-prepared troops credibly equipped to confront often formidable situations.

A developing country such as mine, which has been involved since 1960 in all theatres of operation, is certainly in a good position to appreciate the initiative you have taken, Sir, in a practical quest for the greater effectiveness and credibility of future peacekeeping operations. This is indeed one of the many challenges facing our Organization today.

In document S/2001/21, the delegation of Singapore pertinently draws attention to and summarizes the provisions of the decisions taken by the Security Council on 13 November 2000 and by the General Assembly on 8 December 2000 endorsing the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations on strengthening consultations between troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat. My delegation considers these recommendations, in particular the proposal to establish a Security Council working group on peacekeeping, to be great steps in the right direction. We recognize, however, that, like all human endeavours, they must continue to be supported and accompanied by our common efforts.

Should we not orient ourselves more firmly towards institutionalizing the process of consultations by involving the troop contributors more closely in the consultations from beginning to end, from the preparatory stages to the implementation and conclusion of peacekeeping operations? Such an approach would create a climate of trust and enable certain hesitant countries, once fully briefed, to commit themselves more fully to these operations. To that end, I would suggest the practical implementation of the following recommendations.

Meetings between the members of the Security Council, the Secretariat, the troop-contributing countries and civilian police elements are certainly useful, but should also involve countries that make a substantial contribution to peacekeeping operations, inter alia, by contributing to special trust funds or by providing important logistical equipment or other resources. Consultations should be held regularly with all these actors at every phase of decision-making on the establishment, conduct, assessment and liquidation of peacekeeping operations. Other, regional actors that often play a supporting role in peacekeeping operations should, in our opinion, also feel involved in the drafting of operation mandates.

As I have said, cooperation between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries should be based on measures to establish trust that allow troop contributors to participate in the drafting of the mandates, which, as the Brahimi report notes, should be clear, credible and achievable.

It would also be advisable to redress the disparities in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations between the nationals of northern countries, which are over-represented, and those of the South, which are troop contributors but are sparsely represented. A better balance in its personnel would make possible a more objective assessment of the concerns of the countries of the South regarding the management of peacekeeping operations.

In our view, the Secretariat should also develop a dossier for each peace mission that contains the names and contact information for the personnel of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other agencies and bodies of the United Nations involved in the mission.

The "group of friends" concept, which was established for such missions as those in Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic, could make a significant contribution to strengthening tripartite cooperation between the Security Council, troop contributors and the Secretariat. I therefore very much support the suggestions of the Ambassador of France in this regard.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that in seeking to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations to carry out future peacekeeping missions appropriately, my delegation supports the proposal of the United Kingdom to set up a technical committee to examine certain aspects of the Brahimi report, whose pertinent recommendations we all welcome.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Poland. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Stańczyk (Poland): It is my pleasure to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I would also like to express our gratitude to you for convening this debate and for providing us with an excellent

background paper, which we find extremely timely and useful.

Poland has associated itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union. Given the importance of the subject being discussed at this debate, I would like to offer a few comments of our own.

The search for ways to improve the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping has covered many areas. One pertains to cooperation with troop-contributing countries, particularly within the framework of relationships with the two other partners: the Security Council and the Secretariat of the United Nations. The significance of this issue has been highlighted by the recently increased involvement of the United Nations in peacekeeping and, more importantly, by the wider range of tasks performed within multifunctional peace operations.

For our part, Poland has made every effort to have our cooperation reach the highest standards, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. Throughout our 27 years of involvement in United Nations peacekeeping, 32,000 Polish soldiers, civilian police and other civilian specialists have served under the blue banner. Currently, approximately 1,100 Poles perform their duties in United Nations-led missions, and almost 1,300 do so in other missions mandated by the United Nations Security Council.

Given modest budgetary possibilities, those figures represent the limits of our capacity. Nevertheless, we continue to support United Nations peacekeeping efforts, and we try, at least symbolically, to respond positively when called upon by the Secretary-General by providing additional individual military and police officers or other civilian specialists. Last year, a Polish special police unit 115 strong was deployed in the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We are currently exploring possibilities of contributing other civilian specialists, including prison guards, border guards and customs officers.

Through bilateral and multilateral cooperation with our neighbours and regional partners we continue to improve both our knowledge and our experience in peacekeeping. In this context, let me mention that Polish-Lithuanian and Polish-Ukrainian battalions have been established for the purpose of participating jointly in peacekeeping operations and in the initiative on the Multinational Stand-by Forces High-Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG), which for some time now has been developed by a group of interested countries. Poland currently occupies the chairmanship of SHIRBRIG's steering committee. The concept to form and develop the Brigade is recognized in the Brahimi report as a possible model solution for enhancing United Nations capacity for rapid deployment and effective action. We are pleased to note the successful deployment of SHIRBRIG in the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Poland is proud of its achievements in fulfilling its commitments, which — and I wish to state it clearly — would not be possible without good cooperation with the United Nations, particularly the Secretariat.

We share the opinion that the consultation mechanism is a cornerstone of cooperation between troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat. We welcome efforts to make consultations more meaningful and substantive. In that regard, we view the outcome of the deliberations on the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, including the Security Council's adoption of resolution 1327 (2000), as positive developments.

As a troop contributor we would be interested in the views of Security Council members and other troop-contributing countries, especially with regard to the formulation of the mandate of a new peacekeeping operation or when there is discussion on changing the mandate of an ongoing operation in which Poland is a participant. Furthermore, we would welcome being consulted when decisions are made that affect the safety and security of peacekeepers. At the same time, we would wish to have our views known during such consultations. We are convinced that members of the Security Council would make best use of the opinions of troop contributors.

Much has been said about so-called private meetings between the Security Council and troop contributors, with one such meeting having taken place so far. We believe this discussion format may offer interesting possibilities, and therefore it deserves to be continued.

Improved consultations with troop contributors should help to foster common understanding among all interested partners as to the situation on the ground, a mission's mandate and the risks facing peacekeepers.

Above all, we believe that closer links between troop-contributing countries and the Security Council should strengthen mutual trust and prevent a possible division between those who decide and those who implement.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Bulgaria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sotirov (Bulgaria): I am pleased to congratulate you, Mr. President, for the remarkable way in which you are performing your duties as President of the Security Council for the month of January at the beginning of the mandate of your country, Singapore, on the Security Council. May I express my confidence that the Council can only benefit from your vast knowledge and experience.

The present open debate on the issue of strengthening cooperation among the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat deserves our full attention and further consideration in the context of the fruitful and constructive debates recently conducted in the Security Council and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. We are grateful for the timely and useful background paper submitted by Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani.

We appreciate the way in which today's consultations are being conducted, giving an opportunity to speak first to several non-members of the Security Council. In our view, this innovation has proven itself rewarding in the evaluation process, and it enriches the deliberations in the Council.

Bulgaria associated itself with the statement made this morning by the Permanent Representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union. My delegation fully subscribes to the positions and proposals he put forward on the improvement of cooperation among the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat. Therefore, I will confine my statement to some observations and comments based mainly on the experience and long-standing participation of my country in United Nations peacekeeping.

Bulgaria is strongly committed to United Nations peacekeeping, which continues to be a unique and indispensable instrument of the international community for the maintenance of international peace and security. Our firm commitment to this core activity of our Organization was further acknowledged last year by the decision of my Government to voluntarily increase its financial contribution to the peacekeeping budget under the scale of assessments recently adopted by the General Assembly. We took this important step recognizing the crucial contribution that enhanced financial resources can make to the credibility and effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping. In addition, Bulgaria has substantively increased its physical presence in some of the hot spots on the ground. The goal set by the Bulgarian Government of having 100 police officers in United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo and 50 civilian police observers in United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina — a threefold increase compared to 1999 — was successfully fulfilled by the end of the year 2000. To meet this goal and to prepare for future participation in peacekeeping operations, additional efforts have been deployed to strengthen the national military and police training capacities and increase the number of personnel available for peacekeeping purposes. In this regard, a possible future contribution of a military contingent has been considered a priority issue by my Government.

In this context, Bulgaria attaches particular importance to further improved cooperation among the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries. We welcomed the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and endorsed the subsequent conclusions and proposals of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations on the modalities of cooperation between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries. We believe that this cooperation should further evolve into a transparent, strengthened and more concrete dialogue which continues throughout the entire process of the consideration and formulation of mandates and, later on, during the implementation phase.

Being directly linked to the fundamental question of the formulation of clear, credible and achievable mandates, the consultations must be put on a sound basis to ensure common understanding of the situation on the ground as well as the strategic goals and mandates that might be found appropriate for a particular mission. We welcome, in this regard, Security Council resolution 1327 (2000) as the first step in our common endeavours to explore new ways to enhance the existing system of consultations. The establishment of a new mechanism would enable the

Security Council to have a clearer picture of the resources available for a particular mission while deciding on mandates and strength of personnel. In the same vein, greater transparency during the entire process might encourage the troop-contributing nations to fully meet their commitments. In this context, we commend the determination of Under Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno to promote permanent dialogue, openness and transparency between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and troop-contributing nations, including on so-called sensitive issues. We are confident that such an approach would allow for more realistic operational and logistical planning by the Secretariat.

It is my delegation's view that the Security Council activities relating to peacekeeping can only benefit from increased and fruitful cooperation with troop-contributing countries. The expertise and knowledge accumulated by some of these countries in conflict prevention, crisis management, peacekeeping and peace-building might be utilized during all stages of consultations, including the formulation, implementation and termination of or significant changes in the mandates.

Recognizing the primary responsibility of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security, Bulgaria is further contributing to the fulfilment of this goal by playing a key role in a number of initiatives intended to promote the crisis management and peace-building capacities of countries of south-eastern Europe. The Multinational Peace Force for South-Eastern Europe, established in 1998, stands ready for deployment in conflict prevention and other peace-support operations mandated by the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The headquarters of the Force was activated in August 1999 in Bulgaria and is currently fully operational.

As a troop-contributing country, Bulgaria is looking forward to working closely with all delegations on the important issue of strengthening cooperation among the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat for the achievement of the United Nations objectives in the field of international peace and security.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Nepal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sharma (Nepal): Allow me to congratulate the great people of Singapore, its Government and, personally, you, Mr. President, on Singapore's well-deserved election last fall to the Security Council. It is a happy coincidence that in the very first month of your membership in the Security Council you are presiding over the Council. My delegation particularly appreciates your presence, Mr. Minister, at this open debate.

We welcome other new members of the Security Council and thank the outgoing members for their diligent work on behalf of Member States.

I sincerely thank you, Sir, for selecting such a topical and pertinent theme for the open debate. It is our fervent hope that this debate will, as you have said in your paper,

> "lead to a better relationship between the troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat, and to a new spirit of cooperation among the three partners". (*S/2001/21, annex, para. 8*)

Nepal has always felt, and rather deeply, that the Security Council, troop-contributing countries (TCCs) and the Secretariat should move from the present uneasy symbiosis to a new era of cooperation and partnership. It has been a long-standing necessity for the success of peacekeeping operations. With this conviction, we have always assiduously sought and worked in good faith to enhance cooperation between these actors. We welcome the current willingness of Council members to hear the views of non-members on this issue. This is very encouraging and augurs well for improved dialogue and cooperation.

As a small country, we look to the United Nations as a bulwark of our security. We believe that world peace, under the United Nations initiative and umbrella, is in the common interest of humanity. That is why, since 1975, we have consistently contributed our troops to peacekeeping operations. To date, Nepal has contributed nearly 45,000 troops, and we are currently the eleventh largest troop contributor. Our military personnel and police have helped keep the peace in Asia, Africa and Europe with impeccable professionalism, and 41 of our brave young men have lost their lives in their tour of duty.

Our stake in an improved peacekeeping environment is therefore high. This is the reason why

we relentless seek, as our obligation and as a priority, to strengthen the United Nations peacekeeping capabilities. This was also evidenced by the fact that we joining the consensus last month on creating 95 new posts for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in spite of some procedural reservations on our part.

The Council is a prisoner of its past. Its composition perpetuates the global power configuration of 1945. It has failed to move in step with the changing global scene. Some victors of the Second World War have lost ground, and some of the vanquished have gained remarkable political influence or economic strength. Colonies in Asia, Africa and Latin America have gained independence, if not full freedom and equality, in a world dominated by a few, and joined the United Nations. But the Council has remained largely unrepresentative and become only slightly more democratic over the years.

Although the Council is beset with structural, functional and even attitudinal problems, there is still much we can do, without changing the Charter or its structure, to increase cooperation and forge an active partnership between Council members, TCCs and the Secretariat. Improving the performance of peacekeeping operations is critical in order to keep peace in the world, save lives, and prevent mission failures.

The rationale for greater cooperation is overwhelming. For instance, as of 31 December 2000, out of 37,733 troops deployed in various missions, only 6 per cent of the troops came from the permanent members of the Security Council; and the present members of the Council, both permanent and non-permanent, together had 23.8 per cent of the peacekeepers. The rest, a whopping 76.2 per cent, came from non-members.

Over the years, the Council has spelt out several provisions, as contained in its presidential statements of 4 November 1994 and 28 March 1996, for meetings between the Council and the TCCs, but their true spirit has seldom been translated into practice. Often, consultations and the sharing of information between the Council and the TCCs have proved pro forma, perfunctory and ritualistic.

The fundamental problem with those provisions is that they are long on procedure and short on content. More clearly enunciated substantive guidelines are necessary to establish a well-defined modus operandi for sharing information and conducting consultations.

I have found the Permanent Representatives of troop-contributing countries to be a frustrated and unhappy lot. Their capitals consistently ask for regular, substantive briefings on the peacekeeping missions in which their nationals are deployed. What they get from the Council and the Secretariat is the kind of information one can get from newspapers, or even less. If I may ask, does anyone in the Council think that the sort of information and consultation currently apportioned to the troop-contributing countries is sufficient when their troops' lives are at stake?

We ought to bear in mind that, if the Council and the Secretariat extend more cooperation to troop-contributing countries, then they can in turn expect an equally willing quid pro quo from the latter. This would result in a win-win scenario for all.

A successful peacekeeping operation entails a sense of ownership on the part of TCCs, careful cooperation and coordination among the main players, deft management of discords, enhanced understanding and the best possible collective performance in a team spirit.

We do not need to wait for the High-level Working Group to present a package of reforms to act. Security Council reform ought to be seen as a work in progress. We already have a framework laid out by the Council, and Security Council resolution 1327 (2000) reinforces and expands its scope considerably. The report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping and subsequent General Assembly resolution 55/135 have also marked a step forward.

The Brahimi Panel report is one of the strongest testaments to the imperative need to enhance cooperation between the Council, TCCs and the Secretariat. Its recommendation 64(b) underlines the imperative for consultation with TCCs before the Council adopts a peacekeeping mission-launching resolution and formulates or changes mission mandates, and for substantive briefings.

Ideally, a holistic approach to building partnership calls for a whole m[illegible]y of measures to remove the sharp edges and to forge seamless cooperation between the Council, TCCs and the Secretariat throughout the peacekeeping cycle, from conception to implementation to the winding up of the

mission. Active partnership presupposes a clear head and an open heart, as well as mutual trust among the partners. To preserve the sanctity and vitality of partnership, the rules of the game must be explicitly and adequately spelled out, sincerely respected and meticulously adhered to.

There ought to be a consistent flow of useful information and constant consultations among the partners. Information must be substantive, comprehensive and systematic. Sensitive information ought to be confidentially shared, in an appropriate format, and confined to the partners only, so as not to jeopardize the mission or the peacekeepers' safety and integrity. The best format would be to ensure access by troop-contributing countries to Secretariat briefings to the Security Council.

Consultations need to take place at all stages, before a decision affecting the safety and security of peacekeepers is made. They should be active, specific, interactive and productive, and be carried out in a manner that ensures that TCCs' views and opinions are given thorough and careful consideration when the Council makes its decisions. If the views of TCCs cannot be reflected in a decision, the Council should, to preserve the confidence of TCCs in the process, take pains to explain why.

The existing and the envisaged arrangements, though they largely cover the questions of information and consultation, completely fail to address a number of other principal concerns of the TCCs. These concerns mainly relate to such often-interrelated issues as TCCs' involvement in mission planning and in helping to write the rules of engagement, security backing and exit strategies, and commitment gaps and improved preparedness of TCCs.

Nepal strongly believes that TCCs must be involved right from the start in missions they are to engage in, beginning with mission planning and helping draft the rules of engagement. As we know, differences exist between the cultures, military doctrines, command and control structures and social environments of various TCCs. Bringing TCCs' senior planners to the Secretariat on a short-term basis for mission planning and to help write the rules of engagement helps them bridge the differences and understand each other better. This is vital for the success of a mission.

Security back-up and exit strategies are sure to work wonders, especially to bolster the confidence of small, developing States like Nepal, whose capacity to deal with emergencies is limited. But these elements have always escaped the attention of the Council and the Secretariat. Speaking from our own experience, the safety and security of their personnel is paramount in the minds of troop-contributing countries, even though they are fully aware of the price they may eventually have to pay for peace.

Obviously, not all TCCs' troops are equally trained. Some do not have the luxury of sophisticated weaponry and utmost military preparedness. Not surprisingly, however, parties in conflict, including some non-State actors in a globalized world, may possess more deadly weapons or enjoy greater readiness than peacekeepers from many developing countries and even some developed countries. The confidence that there is security to cover them if the situations deteriorates or if reinforcement is needed, together with exit strategies should they have to be extricated from the conflict areas, would greatly boost the morale of peacekeepers and bring out the best in them. This would also deter the conflicting parties from undermining or overrunning peacekeepers.

These measures also build confidence and motivation for troop-contributing countries to participate in peacekeeping more readily, helping to remove commitment gaps. Gaps in commitment have become a serious problem for troop-contributing countries and the United Nations. Missions like the one in Sierra Leone are facing a shortage of troop commitment from troop-contributing countries. There is an enduring anomaly here. Those who may contribute their troops on a completely self-sustained basis are not pledging their contribution for one reason or another. Those who are contemplating contributing troops do not have the resources to send their troops fully equipped to the mission area. The Council and the Secretariat, therefore, should facilitate cross-matching of troops and equipment to diminish the commitment gaps.

The other element of commitment gaps has to do with lack of preparedness of troop-contributing countries' forces for quick deployment. This particular aspect calls for upgrading the standby arrangements and for ensuring appropriate troop training at national and regional levels. Support from or through the United Nations to troop-contributing countries for earmarking

dedicated troops and imparting necessary training could be effective in building moral commitment and preparedness to contribute troops at relatively short notice.

These are some thoughts that need to be considered in depth and implemented to improve the performance of peacekeeping operations and promote genuine partnership between the Council, the troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat. We echo the proposal that the Security Council should form a subsidiary organ to institutionalize its consultations with troop-contributing countries on a timely and regular basis.

Cooperation cannot be built overnight. We will have to make efforts and invest resources in a coordinated manner to make it happen. At the United Nations we work in a complex environment of clashing priorities, conflicting national interests and shifting turf battles, compounded by national hubris and the bureaucratic labyrinth. This makes cooperation and compromise all the more necessary, and it is not impossible if we consider the greater good of humanity.

The United Nations has helped avoid wars of catastrophic proportions. Now it is faced with new challenges: conflicts within States. Tackling new challenges requires innovative thinking and new tools. This is the time to reflect, accommodate and innovate. TCCs are offering their utmost cooperation. The Council should reciprocate. Working together with open minds and strong hearts we can move away from sketchy information and questionable consultations to an era of constructive cooperation and partnership between these principal actors. Cooperation, understanding, common objectives and a cooperative approach are the key to success. That, to my delegation, is the whole raison d'être of the United Nations.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Singapore.

Twelve years ago, on 11 December 1988, the United Nations was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize for peacekeeping. Today it is unlikely that United Nations peacekeeping would qualify for a prize. The bloom is off the rose. A series of disastrous experiences over the past decade, in places like Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Sierra Leone, have clearly indicated that all is not well in the world of peacekeeping.

The good news is that the United Nations has made an honest effort to investigate these failures. There has been much soul-searching on the failures and shortcomings in United Nations peacekeeping operations, particularly on the part of the Secretariat. The ground-breaking reports of the Secretary-General on the fall of Srebrenica, of the Independent Inquiry on the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and of the Assessment Mission on the recent debacle in Sierra Leone all bear testimony to this. The Secretary-General has also built on this by commissioning the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, better known as the Brahimi report. Some of the Panel's recommendation have already begun to be implemented.

The bad news is that not all the lessons have been fully taken in, either by the Security Council or by the Secretariat. It is shocking that in the year 2000 we should see a recurrence of problems with peacekeeping, despite the lessons of Somalia and Bosnia in the mid-1990s. The unprecedented move by India and Jordan to withdraw their troops from the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), arising from a lack of consultation by the Security Council with the troop contributors, has served as a wake-up call to all those who are responsible for designing and mandating peacekeeping operations.

This UNAMSIL episode demonstrated one of the core truths we have to face head on: there can be no peacekeeping without peacekeepers. Were the United Nations to lose the confidence of major troop-contributing countries (TCCs), we would be effectively sounding the death knell or signalling the decline of United Nations peacekeeping activities. This is why today it was important for members of the Council to first hear the views of TCCs before responding. The rich dialogue we have had since this morning has confirmed that we have adopted the right format for today's discussions.

We have also heard today a rich menu of suggestions on what can be done to strengthen cooperation with TCCs. Many of these suggestions build on ideas contained in the Brahimi report. As I am the last speaker in this debate, I would like to briefly highlight a few which, in our view, deserve closer study with a view to early implementation.

First, there needs to be conceptual clarity on the relationship between the three parties. This morning, for example, I spoke of the triangular relationship

among the three. This means that all three should have direct links with each other. However, when we heard the concerns of the TCCs this morning, it occurred to us that perhaps the working model of the United Nations is not a triangular relationship but a linear relationship, with the Secretariat in the middle. Following today's debate, we need to be certain that all three partners have a common mental map of the structure of the consultative process: should it be triangular or linear?

Secondly, virtually all speakers agreed that we must develop a culture of communication and consultations at all levels among the Security Council, the Secretariat and the TCCs. Given this high level of agreement on the need for such a culture, why has it not been achieved yet? One recurring theme we heard all morning was that consultations should be a two-way street. This calls for a high degree of openness and timeliness on the part of the Council and the Secretariat in sharing pertinent information with the TCCs, especially if their troops are to be put at any risk by the Council's decisions, while at the same time, listening carefully to the TCCs. It also means a habit of consulting the TCCs before major decisions are made.

Another unresolved question at this morning's discussion was whether TCCs should be consulted only on implementation of a mandate or even before that, on the formulation of the mandates. Article 44 of the Charter, which was mentioned by several TCCs today, states that TCCs should be invited "to participate in the decisions of the Security Council concerning the employment of contingents of that Member's armed forces". Should the TCCs be kept informed and their views sought consistently by the Security Council at all stage of their deliberations on a peacekeeping operation?

Thirdly, among the TCCs, there seemed to be general agreement that the present format of TCC meeting is not functioning well, with the exception of the private meeting held on 4 October on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). Indeed, this UNAMSIL meeting can serve as a model for improving the form and substance of private meetings with the TCCs. Clearly, we need to make them more interactive and productive with a view to achieving greater dialogue and cooperation in these meetings. Some guidelines have already been established for TCC meetings. The spirit of these guidelines needs to be realized at the meetings with TCCs.

Fourthly, many countries also felt that there was a need for new mechanisms. Several TCCs referred to paragraph 61 of the Brahimi report, which suggested the institutionalization of consultation with the TCCs through the establishment of ad hoc subsidiary organs of the Council, as provided for in Article 29 of the Charter. Nobody seems to know why this suggestion was not included in the summary of key recommendations. We need to revisit this suggestion.

There could, of course, be many forms for this subsidiary organ. For example, a number of countries suggested a troop contributors' committee for each peacekeeping operation. The United Kingdom has suggested that a Security Council working group on peacekeeping be established, a proposal which was supported by several delegations. In our view, the working group should not replace the Secretariat, but complement the Secretariat in providing the Security Council the best possible advice on peacekeeping matters. The working group should also not add another layer of bureaucracy. Rather, it should add value to the Council's work. Hence, it should have clear, realistic and focused terms of reference.

This proposed working group, or any other body which may be established, will also not replace the current direct meetings between the Security Council and the TCCs on specific peacekeeping operations. Those meetings should continue. However, the working group can enhance the way the Council cooperates with the TCCs. It should serve as a professional bridge to the TCCs, ensuring that the views and inputs as well as the rich experience and expertise of the TCCs are constantly fed to the Council.

Fifthly, another key phrase we heard today was "mutual trust". Whether through the proposed working group on peacekeeping or directly, the Security Council can work in close partnership with the TCCs and the Secretariat to tackle major problems in the peacekeeping arena. The recent commitment gaps in the contribution of troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations can only be resolved jointly by all three partners. The TCCs must be confident in what the Security Council and the Secretariat are doing, and the Council and the Secretariat must be confident that the TCCs can provide the well-trained and well-equipped troops required. In a more practical area, such as the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers, the Council, the Secretariat and the TCCs would have to cooperate closely to ensure that

there is no gap or contradiction in the necessary policies and measures that need to be put in place. The lives of peacekeepers are at stake each time the Council makes a mistake.

Finally, I would like to call on all parties to help develop a new spirit of cooperation between the TCCs, the Security Council and the Secretariat. We, the Council members, should therefore change our attitude towards the TCCs and view them as partners, not spoilers, in our common goal to improve the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations. With a new spirit of partnership, we may avoid a recurrence of the disasters we saw in the last decade and perhaps pave the way for another global award of excellence for United Nations peacekeeping activities.

Before I resume my function as President of the Council, may I also reiterate a point I made in my introductory remarks this morning. We continue to hope that as a result of the rich exchange of views we have heard today some concrete recommendations will emerge. If these recommendations are accepted, we could then consider whether the Council should formulate a resolution or presidential statement to adopt them.

I now resume my function as President of the Security Council.

Consultations on this issue will continue. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue the consideration of this item on the agenda will be fixed in consultation with members of the Council.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.